

From: [Rob Stump](#)
To: [Maria Ristow](#); [Mary Badame](#); [Rob Rennie](#); [Rob Moore](#); [Matthew Hudes](#)
Cc: [Laurel Prevetti](#); [Wendy Wood](#); [Nicolle Burnham](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 15 - Revenue Ballot Measure Consultant Services, October 17
Date: Monday, October 16, 2023 9:37:12 AM
Attachments: [Agenda Item 15 - October 17 LG Town Council.pdf](#)

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Town Council Members,

Attached is a letter that outlines why Wildfire Preparation and Prevention should be strongly considered as the public safety issue for a revenue ballot measure in 2024. Simply put, if we do not provide a reliable on-going source of funding to this public safety threat, Los Gatos will not significantly reduce the threat of wildfire.

One lesson learned from Marin County. In 2020, Measure C was passed, 70.8% yes, resulting in the establishment a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) to address the threat of wildfire. This tax generates \$19.3 million/year for wildfire programs and initiatives. One of the key takeaways, this ballot measure was strongly supported by the public. It is my opinion that the people of Marin County understood the threat and supported the ballot measure. Eighteen of twenty cities in Marin County passed the measure. Two cities chose not to participate and now wish they had.

Thanks for your time and consideration.

Rob Stump


October 16, 2023

Dear Town Council Members,

At your October 17 Council meeting, you will likely approve Item 15 on the agenda, Revenue Ballot Measure Consultant Services. As the Council considers a ballot initiative and a use or uses for generated funds, I strongly suggest that it be focused on Wildfire preparation and prevention or on Public Safety as a broader initiative.

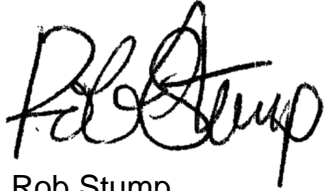
Why address Wildfire preparation and prevention through a new source of generated revenue? While the Town has been successful in “winning” grant funding for fuel reduction and vegetation management, grant funding cannot be relied upon to address all that needs to be done. What needs to be done to save lives and property?

1. Roadside Fuel Reduction: This is an on-going need. Once through the first pass (6-year plan, 5 miles/year), regular maintenance work needs be performed on a 6-year cycle. The Town does not have money built into its operating budget to fund this critical on-going activity. This maintenance must be performed on public and private roads in the WUI.
2. Weed Abatement: The Town needs to abate weeds along its owned roadside rights-of-way. Funding must be secured to make two passes/year (31 miles of roadway). There is currently no funding in the operating budget to fund this critical activity. This must also be funded for both public and private roads. A high percentage of wildfires begin within 50 feet of a roadway.
3. Evacuation Routes: There are numerous substandard width (less than 20 feet) roadways in Los Gatos. A complete review of the roadways and major evacuation routes throughout the WUI must be undertaken to determine needed roadway improvements – public and private. Correction of substandard width roadways in Los Gatos may run into the millions.
4. Emergency Communication: Installation of an Emergency Communication system owned and operated by the Town will cost between \$1.5 to \$2 million.
5. Water Service: There are neighborhoods in the hillside that do not have standard utility-supplied water service. Without this service, fire protection is more challenging. Why? Access to hydrants may be a long distance from the source of a fire. Readily available water will address a localized fire and reduce the potential of it becoming a wildfire.
6. Wildland Fire Specialist and Fuels Crew: These programs will likely have a limited life due to funding constraints. An on-going source of funding is required to sustain them.

I will stop at this point. I think the need is clear and funding is an ongoing challenge. While the Town has had good success securing grants for wildfire initiatives, grants are not a guaranteed source of funding. A reliable source of revenue will enable expedited projects and maintenance that will TRULY make Los Gatos more Wildfire resilient.

In 2020, Marin County passed Measure C (70.8% yes) and formed a Joint Powers Authority (JPA). This tax generates \$19.3 million/year for wildfire programs and initiatives. While Los Gatos would not generate that amount of revenue per year, borrowing against future years' tax collection is possible and would expedite critical projects.

I am ready to assist the Town in developing the case for a Wildfire or broader Public Safety parcel tax. Let me know how I can help you in moving this critical initiative forward for the Town of Los Gatos.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Stump". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Rob" and last name "Stump" clearly distinguishable.

Rob Stump
Los Gatos Hillside Resident